SPITE MARRIAGE

by Katharine Haviland-Taylor

SYNOPSIS: Since her parents died, Marsha Moore has lived with her Aunt Gertrude. Aunt Gertrude's harsh manner of life has turned Marsha into a hard-hearted and flippant girl. She has jilted innumerable suitors; now she is "dropping" Bob Powers, and finding it more painful than usual. But she has seen Geoffrey Tarleton enter the night club where she has taken Bob. And she believes the dissolute Tarleton is the man best suited to her.

Chapter 12

THE BLOW

BUT Bob looked down and the wistful appeal in Marsha's face made a sudden spasmodic tightening of his arm and it brought out his hard flush. Geoffrey had seen "the little exhibition," Marsha realized with tremulous satisfaction. Nothing mattered now, but Geoffrey and his reactions.

It had always been Geoffrey, she thought; always!

The music ceased; she heard, "Marsha," and turned to see Geoffrey and "the silly flapper." And then, her hand was in Geoffrey's and Geoffrey was trying to speak easily and trying to show that he did not care. But his eyes blazed on her.

"Not back too long," he murmured, "and I'm keen to see you. We must have a long session. I have news. And by the by, Marsha, I want you and the new Mrs. Tarleton to meet and be friends—"

She had said something in response. It evidently "passed"; no one looked surprised. She heard herself introducing the suddenly stiffened Bob. The rose-silver walls of the place swam; once more the music started and she moved, rather uncertainly, toward the table where her glass had been refilled by a waiter who had served her before and who knew her needs.

Bob, Geoffrey, "the new Mrs. Tarleton" followed. Geoffrey, no one, must ever know, how it had hit her. She settled, to know that Geoffrey's probing eyes were on her. Did he understand? Was he pitying her?

She would not have his—anyone's pity! No one dared pity her—who had had more homage than had any other woman in all New York. She looked at her glass. She knew she dared not raise it; that the trembling which filled her, would tell her tale for her.

Geoffrey was speaking. "Bee and I," he said, with a glance toward the girl who sat by Marsha, "are great friends in spite of circumstances, and I've told her all about us, Marsha. She'd been longing to meet you; I thought perhaps you'd trouble—for old time's sake—to show her around a bit."

It was incredible!

The plan crystallized that had suggested itself through the pulsing haze a moment before as she glanced at Bob.

"I would adore it," she said; she heard herself speaking and as if from afar and to her amazement her voice sounded natural, easy and uncaring. "But," she went on, "I shan't be here much longer. I am going to Mexico with Bob Powers. Marriage seems to be in the air."

Now she saw that Geoffrey had felt a blow and a hard one. Had he thought she would stay single to mourn his memory?

"You—are going to marry," Geoffrey paused; turned stunned eyes toward Bob—"Mr. Powers?"

"Exactly! And no end clever of you, Geoff, to catch the great idea."

THE little girl was saying something Marsha heard as silly; something about hoping Marsha would be as happy as she was. Bob, turned lemon-white by the pallor that was beneath his tan, was staring fixedly at her. Marsha heard a confused jumble of voices; she saw Bob rise and in a voice that was uncertain and low, but commanding, he said he was sorry, but that he and Marsha must be on.

One did natural things in a natural way, while drugged, she realized. She had said her goodnights, to Geoffrey and "the new Mrs. Tarleton." She had acknowledged the head-waiter's deep bow with a nod; she had tripped light as ever, down the steps with Bob to wait with him under the canopy while the scarlet-clad, braid-trimmed starter whistled for a taxicab.

Bob spoke, as they waited; "Is this play?" he asked.

"No. Not if you want it to be serious, Bob."

"Marsha!"

"If you think I'd make you happy—" She could do that for a little while, perhaps, she reasoned. And it would probably be better for him to have her and know her and be done with her, than to hunger always for her.

He had pressed her arm close, unable to answer.

The taxicab slowed by the curb; she was in. Bob was saying, "The park." Rather gasping it, poor dear, she realized. The starter stood, looking first at a twenty-dollar bill and then after the cab.

"If it's not real this time it will kill me," she heard. Sitting sidewise on the edge of the seat, he was turned toward her, staring down on her; and he was waiting her answer. He laid a timorous hand on hers. "Please," he begged.

"It's as real, I suppose, as anything is," she answered. The sudden flash of a corner light let her see the tears that filled his eyes. She expected him to go to pieces and be a little mad. But instead he held her hands pressed to his lips; head quickly bared and bowed above them.

And why was she crying, she wondered?

Very gently, he drew her into his arms; "Dearest," he murmured, his cheek against hers. He kissed her wet eyes and her lips.

And when, after kissing her, he hid his face against her throat she felt the unfolding wings of a new soul; untried, stiff and weak, those wings, but capable of growth. And feeling the change, she wondered why she felt so odd.

She realized that his gentleness appealed immeasurably because his strength was so limitless. "He must be on guard all the while," she thought; she had never met any one like him. She ran a hand over his tawny hair. He raised his face on which was plainly written all she meant to him.

"When?" he asked.

"Tomorrow," she answered.

He drew a deep breath; "You won't play now?" he whispered. She shook her head.

"How can I ever thank you," he said, "how can I ever—thank you? And—tomorrow, Marsha!"

He was now going a little mad and she was crying again! She did not know why—she had to cry. And he was gentle, in a flash, comforting her as he would a child. She clung to him. "I'll try to make you happy," she thought, drawing with the thought as close to a prayer as she had been in years.

MARSHA'S night was close to sleepless and filled with flashes of Geoffrey's face, the face of "the new Mrs. Tarleton" and Bob Powers' eyes, which had been filled with hunger, gratitude, humbleness and incredulity.

As these flashes passed upon the ebon curtain, she considered that which she had done, and promised to do, to know stark terror. But when, after a few hours of torn and troubled sleep, she woke in the dawn to remember slowly, she was not sorry.

Bob Powers was, she knew certainly, the best man, the finest type, she had ever met. He would always hunger for her unless he learned through her, the fleetingness of passion; the sameness of women and the fact that a man could dance with—or kiss—any girl and that, to love lightly meant peace.

She would, no doubt, graduate him with honors, she reflected bitterly. And perhaps that would be the best thing she had ever done in the course of her useless and selfish and cruel life.

She sat up in bed to stare at the square of leaden gray that was a window. She was greeting her wedding day, she realized . . . strange sensation.

At least, she reflected, she was one woman who would not go soft about the silly business; she would expect no miracles and she would be shocked by no "natural outcome."

Her throat, for some maddening reason, was stiffening again. At least they liked the same books. They would probably "make out in a sort of way" while they "had to."

At least she could be a comfortable companion in hours that demanded that. She knew she had a good disposition when she was not nagged. She didn't suppose Bob nagged. Of course he might, she mused easily. Almost every one, she presumed, when close enough, seemed to have to nag. Well, no matter.

A clock struck the quarter hour that follows six and she saw the winter dawn, full and bold.

(Copyright, 1934, by K. Haviland-Taylor)

Monday, Marsha "amazes" Aunt Gertrude.

BOY SCOUTS AT LAKE OF WOODS ENJOYING CAMP

Program of Sports, Light Routine Duties and Scout Study Makes Time Fly for Lads—Health Holds Good

Scouts attending the Boy Scout camp, Camp McLaughlin at Lake o' the Woods, are reported as enjoying the camp. The first period opened on July 8. Time passes very rapidly, the boys being kept busy with a program of interesting activities.

The boys are housed in large screened cabins. The program allows for at least nine hours sleep each night. After an active day the Scouts usually welcome Taps, and that is the last heard of them until reveille in the morning. Breakfast is at 7:30, with work hour following. The boys are given the opportunity to work around camp for an hour each morning, preparing vegetables to be used during the day, carrying in the wood, cleaning up around the cabins and camp. The Scouts in this way share in keeping the camp clean and orderly.

Following the work hour, instruction is given in scoutcraft and in the passing of the scout tests. Next Sunday afternon there will be a court of honor. A number of boys have already finished a number of merit badges. It is expected that a large group will receive second and first-class advancements. The scouts have been eager to pass tests and make progress in their scout advancement.

All scouts are tested for their swimming ability at the beginning of each period. Twenty-seven were rated as swimmers, being able to swim at least 25 yards, and 11 as sinkeasies. Regular classes are held each day and the boys who are not swimmers are given instruction. Alfred Dodson was first beginner to advance into the swimmer rank. The others are making good progress in learning to swim.

Ten scouts are working on the swimming merit badge and two on the life-saving merit badge. Dale Roberts has completed the swimming merit badge and Stuart Forbes has passed all tests for the life-saving badge. The new boat, constructed by troop No. 8, has been in constant demand.

At the first evening campfire, Camp Director A. O. Soderberg explained to the boys what would be expected of them during their stay in camp. The camp honor system and emblem system was also explained. There are no punishments and the boys are not deprived of any privileges. The scout oath and laws are the scouts' guide to good conduct in camp. A scout, to be rated as a satisfactory camper, must get along with the other fellows, live up to the scout oath and laws, make progress in scout advancement, take part in the camp activities and be helpful around the camp.

D. F. Parker is the camp doctor. In addition to being responsible for the health of the scouts, he also conducts first-aid classes. So far the doctor has not been very busy, and states that he is enjoying a good vacation. Another good indication is that all of the boys are reporting regularly to the mess hall for three square meals every day.

Last Friday, 38 scouts left camp after breakfast for a trip to Brown mountain. It was a rather stiff climb, the mountain being 2,000 feet higher than the camp. All enjoyed the trail lunch of sandwiches and peaches. After lunch, some time was spent in exploring around the top. The scouts returned to camp in time for a swim in the lake before dinner. After the swim everyone felt much rested and all were ready for the big dinner the cook had prepared.

Medford scouts attending the camp this period are: Dale Roberts, Gerald Keesee, Sam Richardson, Donald Root, Burdette Dodge, Bub Thierolf, Douglas Janney, Richard Nelson, Delmar Hockersmith, Alfred Dodson, Bobbie Strang, Walter Krease, Bon Nixon, Donald Horner, Richard Schuchard, Bill Littrell, Roland Rinabarger, Spencer Wells, Jerry Vawter, Chet Ferguson, Ray Barrow, Harold Sleight, Hugh Ferguson and Bert Isaacs.

Next camp period opens on Sunday, July 22. The registration has been good, but a few more boys can still be accommodated. Those who have not signed up at scout headquarters for this period are urged to do so at once.

BUFFALO BILL'S PAL JOINS LAST ROUNDUP

PHILADELPHIA, July 17. — (AP) — Another of "Buffalo Bill's" fighting companions, Charles W. Voorhees, is gone.

Voorhees, who rode with Colonel Cody in western Indian warfare, as a youth, died last night at his summer home in Stone Harbor, N. J. He was 85.

Voorhees was an infantryman in Cuba during the Spanish-American war, and entered Mexico as an artilleryman with General John J. Pershing's expedition against Pancho Villa.

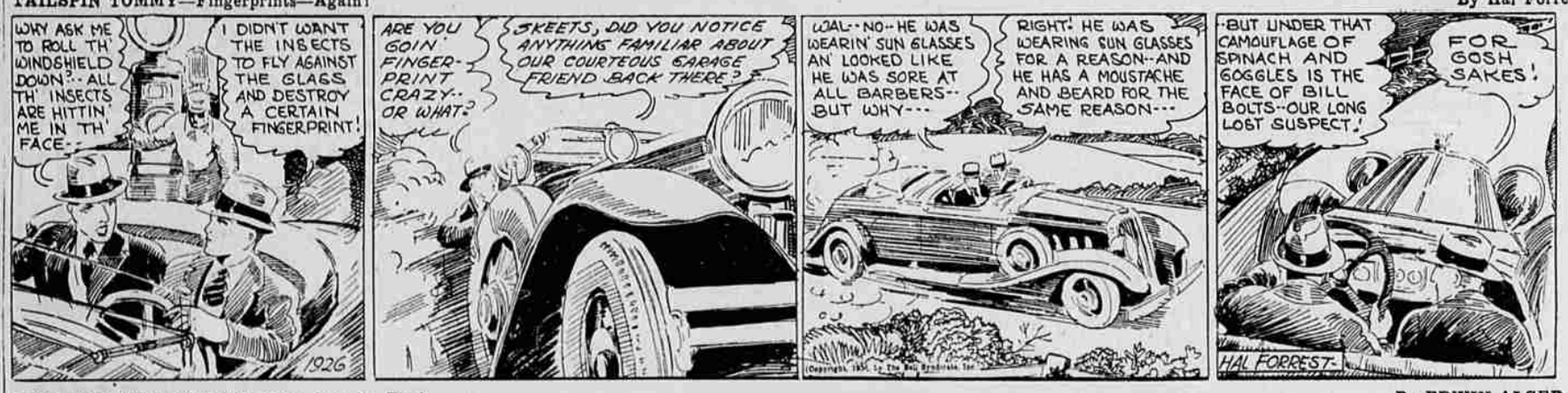
THE WORLD AT ITS WORST — By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

SENT TO GET SOME ICE CREAM FOR HIS MOTHER'S LUNCHEON PARTY, JUNIOR UNFORTUNATELY PASSED THE BALL FIELD AS THE SCORE WAS TIED IN THE NINTH

7-17 (Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.) GLUYAS WILLIAMS

S'MATTER POP— By C. M. Payne

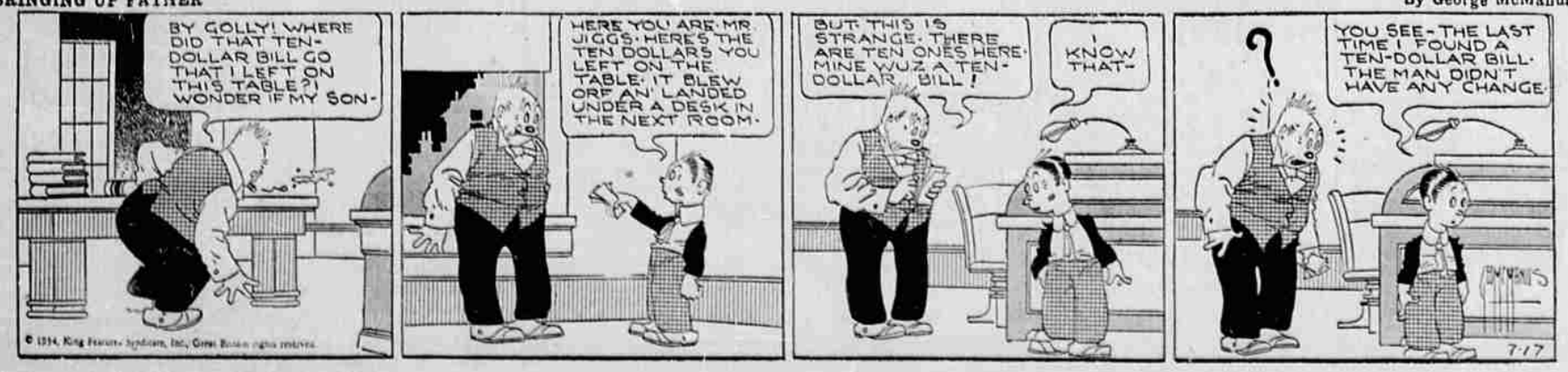
TAILSPIN TOMMY—Fingerprints—Again! By Hal Forrest



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Luke Says So, Too! By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Next Thursday By Sol Hess

BRINGING UP FATHER By George McManus



ALLISON 'BURNED UP' BY TENNIS SELECTIONS

(Copyright, 1934, by the Associated Press.)

LONDON, July 7.—(AP)—Burned to a crisp by the failure of Captain R. Norris (Dick) Williams to name him on the United States Davis cup team for the intersone matches against Australia, Wilmer Allison today told the Associated Press he probably would return home Wednesday on the liner Europa.

RAIN AND FOG AID IN HALTING FOREST FIRE

HOOD RIVER, Ore., July 17.—(AP)—A light rain and a high fog today helped a CCC crew control a forest fire at the head of Post canyon. The spectacular blaze apparently had been conquered at noon. It was in the area of origin of former serious burns.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

SUPREME COURT TO REST FROM HEARINGS

SALEM, July 17. — (AP) — The Oregon supreme court will not hear any more appeals or arguments until about the second week of September, it was announced today. The present docket has been cleared prior to the vacation period of August, and the only cases which would be considered would be possible mandamus actions. The court now has about 35 cases under advisement, but it was believed most of these would be decided prior to August 1. At least three sets of opinions would be handed down the next two weeks.

Notice to Fruit Growers.

My office is located in the corner of Hotel Holland Building connected with the Carl Tengwald offices.

COURT HALL.

Phone 542 We'll haul away your refuse. City Sanitary Service.